/150 cont./

525 are placed between the players and taken by the winner, but since the luck often changes during a match, the same prize passes back and forth frequently.

I have seen this game played only by two men (not by women and children). One finds especially passionate players
524 among the Auin, in particular among older men.
535 Dancing game of the women (goei) (see Photos. 36 and 37).

I am in doubt as to whether I should classify this under games or dances.

A number of women line up along a tree trunk lying on the ground. All of them in rhythm alternately place the front part of first the right and then the left foot on the trunk. It proceeds in this fashion, slowly at first, then ever faster. If the women have their backs turned to the tree trunk, they place their heels on it in the same fashion.

Sometimes also two rows of women will face each other.
[533] Frequently, a kind of rhythmical singsong is also uttered by them.

The game is begun with everyone calling out //ai, meaning something like "let's go."

In some dances bucks' horns are tied in front of the forehead (eland bull dance). One can hardly designate these as true masked dances, however.

The Auin are acquainted with stilts, which are used by men
● 481 and boys. I might mention that I did not see any, but when I described them the Auin seemed to be very familiar with them.

526 Foot races (gâ).

The runners line up in a row, and at the word "gâ" they all run. The winner obtains a prize of food or of some useful object (for example, a knife).

Older people act as judges. Bloody quarrels are said to occur
[578] when the prizes are awarded.

Stick throwing (gai or albi).

Thin sticks of any length up to two meters and taken from the rosinkis bush are thrown forward with a whistling swing and from a running start (they are not flung like a spear, but grasped at one end). The object is to throw as far as possible. No prizes are offered; hence it is a real sport. Since it is fairly strenuous, this game, like all the others, incidentally, is played only when

[20 cont.]

put themselves under a chief, a Herero half-breed named Krüger, whose position was acknowledged" (see p. 87). "In Naidaus a Bushman leader named Aribib introduced himself, who, like Krüger in the east, was recognized as the captain of the Bushmen in the west" (p. 88).

"During the journey of Captain Volkmann in the year 1902 to the Okovanggo, the !Kung Bushmen provided extensive help. Volkmann describes these !Kung in the following manner: 'The Bushmen, who are almost totally naked, are very sensitive to the cold. In the morning each Bushman has a burning log in his hand, which he holds close to his chest. The other hand is placed on the shoulder with the upper arm pressed close to the body. At the resting place the log is used immediately to make a fire. When a Bushman walks in front of the horse as leader, he springs with incredible speed, now here and now there, to get a tuber or root out of the ground. Various berries growing on low shrubs are also very popular. Anything that can serve is used as a tobacco pipe: kudu horns, calabashes, hollowed fruit of the Strychnos, old metal cartridge shells, and so forth. Most of all they like to smoke through water, which is never renewed. When they run out of tobacco, they boil the bark of a tree in the thick tobacco water, dry the bark, which has some tobacco taste, and smoke it' " (p. 180).

F. Seiner reports the following concerning the divisions of this tribe:

"The Kung, to the best of our present knowledge, are divided into four groups. The western group seems to extend from the Portuguese border near Kurinkuru along the route via Tschitschib to the Omuramba u Owambo and then seems to be bounded by the latter and in the east by the line Nuragas--Blockfontein. The Karakuwisa group bordering them to the east inhabits the valley of the Omuramba u Omatako from Karakuwisa to Blockfontein during the dry season, and during the rainy season also the steppes 100 to 150 kilometers east and west of the Omuramba and the latter itself up to the Kanovlei. The more southerly group extends from the latter in the Omuramba to around Osondema; we shall call these Nog-au, who have already settled in the central Kalahari and can scarcely be classed with

[24 cont.]
000 they had never seen any. A certain dry humor spiced their con-
522 versation. I once said to a Bushman: "If you tell me this, you
161 will get whatever you want." He answered: "Good, I shall speak
157 and you will give me your automobile." Their imagination is
123 very poor; in this respect they are much too accurate as observers
of nature. Once a young Bushman woman with two children came
to me and wanted to buy some sugar. I said to her: "I won't sell
you anything, but you will get the sugar if you tell me some
children's stories, for example, about animals." After some hesi-
[530] tation she began the story of Arri, the guinea hen. It was no
fairy tale, but a detailed account concerning this important food
bird. She even imitated the calls of the guinea hen, "for exam-
ple, when someone comes and there is danger, then they say,
'gannana he gannana he,' but when they are alone and enjoying
themselves, then they go 'gi gi gi.'" The children had to imi-
[861] tate this until they were able to mimic the sound accurately.
Then it was the turn of the sand hen, which says, "gi ganna gi
ganna"; then the ostrich, which goes, "hmm, hmm, hmm"; then
the gum bird [Harzvogel], which says, "hai-dschi, hai-dschi,"
and the owl, "mhm, m."

3. Posture, Movement, Stamina

516 As a result of his marked lordosis, the Bushman never as-
sumes a posture that would conform to our military ideal; he
almost always stands with his stomach somewhat protruding.

●481 The way the Bushmen run is very peculiar and would
justify detailed study. [25] The run is really a continuous fast
walk, in which the legs are kicked forward, but the lower thighs
are never brought back high, as is the case with our runners. The
body is held as straight as possible, and the head up, not forward (1).

[113] 1. E. v. Eickstedt (Rassenkunde und
Rassengeschichte der Menschheit
[Ethnology and History of Mankind],
p. 556) states: "The foot is put in a
peculiar transverse position, which
makes the track in the sand easily

!KUNG

[25 cont.]

481

recognizable -- a characteristic that during the old Bushman persecutions cost many thousands of these unfortunate and peculiar hominid creatures their miserable existence. The walk of the Sanides is also peculiar; they do not walk, they prance. Out of habit they always raise their knees and feet as though they were walking among the sharp grasses and thorn bushes of their homeland. This, like the swaying walk of sailors, is of course, a secondary, acquired characteristic, not a racial one."

I prefer, nevertheless, to regard the walk of the Bushmen as somewhat racially conditioned.

516 The sitting position of the Bushman is the squatting position that is practiced by so many primitive peoples and was probably at one time universal among mankind. At the same time, their position differs from that of the Blacks, insofar as the latter usually squat in such a way that the bones of the ischium do not touch the ground, whereas this is the case among the Bushmen. As a result, when they squat, they bend their backs quite far and must spread their legs apart.

513 When sleeping, the Bushman lies rolled up on his right or left side. The children all cuddle up to the mother to sleep.

147 The muscle power of the Bushmen is very weak. The dynamometric measurements that I carried out show that the pushing power of adult men is less than that of European working women; it only amounts to between 30 and 40 kilograms, whereas European women achieve approximately 60 kilograms, men engaged in light work average 80 kilograms, and European heavy workers and the smiths among us reach an average of 120 and more kilograms. Black heavy workers attain an average of only 80 kilograms. Thus, the Black on the average is twice as strong as a Bushman, and the White is three times as strong.

At the same time, there is no essential difference between the sexes among the Bushmen themselves.

[25 cont.]

147 481 Similarly, the strength displayed by the Bushmen in using the bow is by no means impressive. While their momentary efficiency is low; their endurance in marching is great. In 1916 when the farmer Schwarz in Neudesenberg (Keitsas) was sick with black water fever, the farmer's wife sent a Bushman to Grootfontein for a bottle of champagne. The man left in the forenoon and returned around midnight. The distance was at least 100 to 120 kilometers, for the highway, which has few detours, is 90 kilometers long. (Informant: Farmer Schwarz in Duwib.)

4. Physical Types and Constitution

142 The Bushmen are a distinctly human type of savage with very gracile bone structure. A group of them that I designate as South Khoin is the only form of human being adapted to desert life, or in any case is the form best adapted to it.

The type that has developed there can in no way be subsumed in our physical type schema. Since this same type to a considerable degree is also involved in the composition of the northern forest Bushmen, there are naturally a great many individuals whom we cannot classify at all in our sense. At any rate, however, we can -- and here I am anticipating some of my anthropological conclusions -- differentiate among both sexes of the !Kung a longitype and a brachytype. Especially among the women it is almost always possible to differentiate the "chubby youthful form" from the so-called future form.

In another place I have defended the view that the athletic type should be regarded as the true normal-type, and that this type has the innate ability to accumulate a moderate amount of fat. The muscular-respiratory type with a slighter development of the skeleton and musculature does not possess the ability for a great accumulation of fat, whereas the digestive type with slightly developed musculature has a great ability to accumulate fat.

[26] From the athletic type a continuous series leads through the respiratory and digestive forms to the tall-asthenic and short-asthenic types and from there to the decided weaklings.

≠AUIN
NOGAU
NARON

[68 cont.]

1. Birth and Childhood

844 Among the ≠Auin, the husband of a woman in childbed slings the string of his bow around her stomach, but he is not present at the birth itself. The cord is severed with the tip of a reed splinter.

844 Among the Naron and Nogau, the delivery proceeds as it does among the !Kung; an old woman usually provides assistance, however.

845 Twins (Hoi-holi) are not desired; among the Nogau one of them is killed.

553 844 Among the Nogau, the father gives the child its name. There the child has its umbilical cord severed by means of a sharp quartz splinter. A woman in childbed may not eat blood and head meat. Until the child is able to sit up, the husband [833] may not cohabit with the mother. The latter custom is also found among the Betschuana. Nogau children are not allowed to eat 262 the flesh of the wildcat and of two birds (tsugnussi and /gui). [114] Kaufmann has made some observations concerning children's 524 games; Bleek also provides some data:

Among the ≠Auin little bows and arrows serve as children's toys. The same applies to the Naron and Nagau [sic]. Stilts [461] are known among the Auin and are used by men and boys. Concerning children's games among the Naron, Miss Bleek reports: 524

The Game of the Big Water Snake

A boy crawls on his stomach to a small pile of sand which is supposed to represent the waterhole. At some distance from it, the children sit in a row, one behind the other, in such a way that each one sits between the legs of the one behind him; he puts his hands on the shoulder of the person in front of him. The biggest child [69] always sits at the front, the smallest at the back. They sing a song that in part is no longer intelligible. (Probably in the children's language.) This big "snake" now moves very slowly around the waterhole, while the water snake from time to time throws sand on it; then the others withdraw. At the end the snake catches one from the row and "eats it." I

/248 cont./

142

	Number of persons examined	Second toe extending farthest	First toe extending farthest	First and second toe extending farthest	Second and third toe extending farthest
Men	14	9	1	4	0
Women	17	11	0	3	3
Children	8	7	1	0	0
Total	39	27	2	7	3

151 I was also able to gather some data concerning physiological conditions. By means of Snellen charts, I discovered very keen sight for all the persons examined. Threefold visual keenness was attained by all those examined, and some had even higher degrees, up to sixfold.

The ticking of a watch could be heard at a distance of three meters by most of those examined.

I have frequently observed yawning among Bushmen.

48/ The gait of the Bushmen has something very characteristic about it; in walking, they raise the knees surprisingly high, a custom that is explained by the nature of the country. Because of the low and commonly thorny shrubs through which they travel with uncovered legs, they are forced to raise their legs quite high in walking, and they maintain this gait even when they are moving across ground that has no growth on it. In addition, the achievements of these small inhabitants of the bush on the march and in running are quite enormous.

[147] Bushmen who had been sent out on patrols by the station covered a distance of 130 kilometers in less than 48 hours without displaying visible signs of fatigue. They followed the cavalry troop, which frequently broke into a trot, happily and without difficulty on foot, trotting themselves whenever the troop accelerated its pace.

/249/ 201 Extreme astonishment is expressed by opening the mouth and eyes wide. I was able to observe this myself when I played a phonograph before the unsuspecting Bushmen. When the performance was over, the audience asked me whether the people who were in the apparatus and sang there also slept in it and received their food through the horn.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10

114 all our food and water, gasoline, and equipment in supplies to last us for several months. We crossed great drought areas, once crossing four hundred miles of the central desert of Bechuanaland where there was no water at all, and once traveling every day for two weeks into an unmapped part of the desert of South-West Africa, close to the Bechuanaland border, where we found a waterhole and refilled our empty [12] drums. All this was for the purpose of filming and studying the life and customs of the people of the Kalahari, who are called the Bushmen.

142 Bushmen are a naked, hungry people, slight of build and yellow-skinned; the only feature they have in common with their large-boned, darker-skinned neighbors, the Negro or Bantu tribes living at the edges of the Bushmen's territory, is their peppercorn curly hair. Otherwise, Bushmen are very like the Asian peoples, often having Mongolian eyefolds and rather broad, flat faces with almost no noses at all. Because of the dust, perspiration, and the blazing sun, their skins darken to a copper brown, but under their arms where sweat has washed the dust away the yellow skin shows. Bushman babies, in fact, are born pale pink, often with a dark, pigmented area at the base of their spines which Kung Bushmen [826] call "the jar"—because, they say, the mother carries her baby and her water jar together in the pouch of her garment—but which we know as the Mongolian Spot.

Physically, the Bushmen are a handsome people, though short of stature—a man being a few inches over and a woman a few inches under five feet—and a little swaybacked of carriage, which makes their bellies stick out. They are handsome 481 because of the extreme grace in their way of moving, which is 142 strong and deft and lithe; and to watch a Bushman walking or simply picking up something from the ground is like

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watching part of a dance. This is not a beauty of the flesh, and therefore exists in everyone who is not an infant or stiff with age. Bushmen have long, slender arms and legs, and the men are built for running, all lean muscle and fine bone, and consequently they often seem younger than they are. They are delicate of proportion, too, and they speak very softly.

Bushmen dress themselves in the skins of animals, a man wearing only a leather loincloth and a woman a small leather apron and a big kaross, a leather cape made from a whole animal hide, belted at the waist with a sinew cord, knotted at the shoulder, forming a pouch in back where a baby can ride, and where the woman carries her blown ostrich eggs, which are used as water containers. Bushmen are a very neat people; they keep their clothes tidily about themselves, and though they do not really need haircuts because their curly hair breaks off by itself, they prefer to keep their hair cropped close to their heads. White ornaments of ostrich-eggshell beads dangle from tufts of their hair and are strung in tiny bands around their arms and knees. Sometimes they wear leather sandals, but mostly their hard brown feet are bare.

The first time we came to the Kalahari, we spent several months looking for Bushmen. It was very hard for us to find them because they are shy of any stranger. If they believe that you are coming, they run away like foxes to hide in the grass until you have gone. Their tiny huts, dome-shaped and made of grass, are also inconspicuous. I once walked right into an empty werf, as their tiny villages are called, and didn't see the little scherms, or huts, hidden in the grass until I noticed a small skin bag dangling in a shadow, which was a doorway. Then I saw the frame of the scherm around it, then the other scherms as well. The werf was abandoned, all the people had slipped away, but I heard two voices whis-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

CHAPTER FOUR

The Fire

After a long talk with Gai and Ukwane we found that, because of a shortage of melons and roots, they did not like to live at the place where we found them, which was called Gu Nu, and they were planning to move. We asked them if they would mind our coming with them when they did move, and they, with great aplomb, showing no surprise at what must have seemed a strange request, said politely that they would not mind at all. We had good relations with them by that time and had already been living near them for several days.

As we would be asking them to spend time talking with us, we agreed to give them food, water, and firewood to make up for what they might gather if we were not taking their time, as well as salt and tobacco to make their hearts glad. It seemed to be a good arrangement, and they were as pleased as we.

Soon after that, when Ukwane had decided where to go, we packed up our camp, they packed up theirs, and we put everything on the trucks and drove away. The Bushmen all rode with us except the two oldest women, Kutera and Dasina, who said they were too tired to ride and preferred to walk. They did, too, taking with them all their possessions as

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FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

well as great loads of melons, all of which we offered again and again to carry for them, but because, they said, they might want to stop for the night or just refresh themselves along the way, they would not part with their bundles.

The place we went to was called Ai a ha'o; it was the pan where we had seen the lion. It took us almost all day to drive there, and shortly after we arrived Dasina and Kutera joined us, having traveled almost as fast as we. Those two old women must have walked at four or five miles an hour all the way, over veld so rough that the trucks couldn't go much faster.

Before dark, the Bushman women had built a werf, a clearing of grass for each family with a shallow pit to sleep in and a place for the fire, all four clearings under the branches of a single tree which would give them shade in the daytime. On the branches each person hung whatever there was to hang, quivers, skin bags, or aprons, and these things swung in the cold wind. The women gathered firewood and lit their fires, and Dasina asked Twikwe to stand on her stomach because she was tired from her long walk and wanted a massage. Before they went to sleep the men and the three young boys walked to our camp, about fifty feet away, to say good-night, but the women stayed at home because at night all Bushmen women stay at home. A woman does not even leave her fire to go to her neighbor's fire three feet away because people will say that she doesn't like to stay home; she speaks loudly to her neighbor instead. Bushmen are a rather conservative people, and they are very moral in that they keep their own rules.

The smoke in the west that Gai had seen when he roasted the tortoise intrigued him very much. Again and again he said that it was people's smoke, and one morning he said he wanted to go over to it, to look for the man who was Wita-

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FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

be's father, Twikwe's husband, the man who had run away 574
for good when we had come. Gai and Ukwane both believed that he could be found, and as they regretted his missing the meat, the salt, the tobacco, and the water that they themselves were enjoying, they suggested that we look for him in a certain omaramba—a shallow valley like a dry river bed—called the Okwa Omaramba.

One morning John, Bob, William, Gai, Witabe, and I set out in the jeep to find him. We were loaded heavily because we were planning to stay the night, the Okwa being far and the terrain rough. All three little boys wanted terribly to go, but Gai felt that they would be a nuisance and chose only Witabe since we were going for his father. Wite pointed out that the man was his father, too, but Gai didn't listen. As we were leaving, the two boys ran beside us, using the last minute to beg to come, but Gai still would not listen or weaken, and the two boys saw that it was no use, lost heart, and dropped behind.

It was a fearfully hot day, with lots of dust and sticking grass seeds, the jeep was overcrowded and overloaded, and I had to hold the rifle between my knees and the camera in my arms to cradle them from banging against each other and on the sides of the jeep. My head cracked against the knees of the people behind me, and everyone was sticky, hot, and very uncomfortable.

We drove until we came to plains that only Gai had seen before, and there the terrain was so rough that Gai and Witabe decided to get out and walk in front to find the easiest way. We would all gladly have done this, but some of us had to stay in the jeep to protect our possessions. Soon Gai and Witabe were far ahead, and we crept behind them for most of the day.

Gai walked first, Witabe behind him, as Bushmen always 574 431

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FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

574
[1-81] walk in single file, and they seemed very small, naked, and far away under the burned, pure sky, moving toward some remote destination where they hoped to find a man who had been walking away from them for almost a month, perhaps at some nameless little pan lost somewhere in the countryside, perhaps in a nameless bend of the omaramba. As they walked they zigzagged, avoiding small obstacles such as stones or thorn bushes, very incongruous with the enormity of the sky and the plains. The bow on Gai's shoulder made a bold upward curve.

A tree appeared on the horizon, and they veered toward it. When they reached it they sat in its shade, two shadows in the yellow grass, and a puff of smoke rose as they lit their pipes. We caught up to them and found Gai digging for a [222] *torabe* vegetable. He reached into the hole he had made and dragged it from its roots, brushed the dirt away, and chopped it into six pieces, giving one to each of us. We ate that for lunch. It was bitter and moist, firm as an apple and pleasant because it was wet. As we sat there we noticed the smoke of three veld fires which had suddenly risen, perhaps stirred by the wind far away, two small ones in the north and east, one large one in the south, its smoke reaching up to the sky first in little tendrils, then billowing in great clouds like the clouds in the sky but browner.

Gai and Witabe stood up, brushing sand from their legs, and walked into the sunlight again, turning toward the larger fire. Bushmen often set the veld alight to signal to each other, [201] but they do not send messages; a fire simply shows other people where they are, and even this is vague, as fires are sometimes set by natural causes.

137 After traveling several hours over the plains, we came to a little forest in a valley. A fire had been through there and had burned all the yellow grass from the ground, leaving black

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GIKwe

ashes and little black, charred thorn bushes, but the flames had not touched the leaves on the trees. These remained yellow-green, orange, and silver, tangled and confused above the black, breaking away from the branches when the wind blew and falling like autumn leaves in New England. The whole valley would have been very like New England except that there were leopards in the forest; as we looked around we found a leopard's tracks. We rested in the shade on the side of the valley, and as we sat quietly we heard the sound of hoofs in the valley below, and we saw through the bushes the dark backs of a herd of wildebeest, walking along in single file, first the cows, then the larger bulls, their curved cow horns making them look for all the world like a herd of small, dark cattle.

Gai was on his feet in an instant, his bow in his hand, and, like a leopard springing, he jumped past us and ran, silent and half crouching, through the bushes beside them, but he had no arrow, and when he got near enough to shoot he had to stand up and shoot a grass blade after them, partly for practice, as a Bushman hunter will never miss a chance to practice his aim, but partly because Gai was still too young to be able to resist making them run. They threw up their heads, snorting like horses, and galloped away, leaving behind them a great cloud of dust. Gai ran after, his heels pounding, and was gone in a few great perfect strides, as if a hawk had left us with a few stiff beats of its wings.

Witabe, too, was completely absorbed. Although he did not run after the wildebeests, he got to his feet and gazed after them, unconsciously making a gesture with his hand representing the head and horns of a wildebeest. He moved his hand in time with their running, saying softly: "Huh, huh, boo. Huh, huh, boo," the sound of their breath and grunting as they ran.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

above the earth in a layer. We were crouching at a fire we had built, warming our hands against the cold, when the sun came up. We heard birds singing in the fresh air as if nothing had happened, then the sound of faint pounding far away, a mortar being struck with a pestle. Soon we heard a second mortar join the first as another woman began breakfast for her family, and we knew that two women meant perhaps six people, therefore a band.

Gai stood up and stretched his legs, then took a tiny coal from our fire between his thumb and finger and dropped it into his pipe, inhaling deeply and holding the smoke in his lungs while he handed the pipe to Witabe, who also puffed and returned the pipe, when at last Gai exhaled, spat, and scooped the pipe through the sand, extinguishing the fire and saving the rest of the tobacco. He stuck the pipe in his belt, flung his great kaross over his chest to warm his belly, and strode off in the direction of the sound, the ragged edges of his great cape swinging at his ankles as his strong feet carried him away. He walked under a burned log that had partly fallen and was braced up by another tree, and as he did the white ashes blew from it and the light of dawn shone through the ash like light through a flurry of snow.

Later in the day, when we had eaten cornmeal for breakfast, while we waited for Gai to come back, we went down to the flats below our hilltop to inspect the damage of the fire. The land below our camp was in utter desolation, startling and ruined, a desert of ash. We found only the orange sand and black ashes still in the shape of the grass blades that made them, black ashes below burned bushes still in the shape of the leaves that made them, and, on the ground, flat, perfect skeletons of vines, just in the shape of the vines that made them but black, in powder, disintegrating into dust when the wind touched them. All around us lay the smolder-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

ing great carcasses of fallen trees, some with the leaves on the top still green, that were filling the air with the smell of their wood burning. The ground was still warm to walk on, but all the bushes, all the little succulents, all the vines that marked the water roots were gone; no snake or lizard or animal was there, all were burned or had gone; we saw only animal tracks half filled with ashes, and a few birds come to eat dead insects. We saw a pair of secretary birds and later a pair of paouw, huge gray birds that walk more than they fly, wandering through the ruins looking for dead reptiles.

As we walked, fine black powder rose to dust our legs, and now and then, off through the standing tree trunks and between the fallen trees' great upflung roots, little whirlwinds crossed back and forth, raising the dust in spiraled pillars. Bushmen say that whirlwinds show the presence of the spirits of the dead.

Witabe's eyes searched over the ground, and when he saw a small mound of earth he walked up to it and punctured it with his toe. Out rushed a horde of ants, which had been safe in their tunnels when the fire passed and now began at once to repair their damaged mound. Witabe crouched among them and began to pick and eat them, selecting the soldier ants, ones with large heads and heavy jaws. He bit off the abdomens, tossing the heads away. Presently he offered some to us, as I had feared he would; as everyone else ate one, I did also, and found that it was not too unpleasant but sour and very watery, very like a blackberry before it is ripe. The workers, I am told, are tasteless, but the fighters are considered a near-delicacy; mine opened her jaws wide to fight my thumb before I ate her.

Later in the day, when the sun in the sky, the still burning trees, and the fire-warmed sand made the air on the flats unbearably hot, we turned back to camp for the shade of our

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

481 trees, and on our way we found a path where before there
487 had been none. We followed it, it led to camp, and at its end we found Gai and eighteen other Bushmen, whose feet as they had walked in single file had worn a track. As we ap-
609 proached, the eighteen strangers drew back and together, the women behind the men, babies in their arms, and watched us hostilely. Gai persuaded them to sit down, which they did, all together, and when we asked them if they were hungry they said yes, so we gave them a drink of water and set a big pot of cornmeal to cook on our fire. We gave them each tobacco, which they smoked while they waited for the cornmeal to cook.

621 In that band there were six men, five of them in their thir-
162 ties, five women who seemed much younger, and one woman
596 who was very old. There were also three young boys and three babies, two girls and a boy. We guessed from the looks of the people—and later found that we were right—that the band was a small extended family. The old woman seemed to be the key figure of the band, for with her were her two sons and three daughters, their wives and husbands, and their children. The sixth man—a boy, really—did not seem to belong in this tightly woven group, for he was not married, being too young; he seemed too young to be the child of the old woman, though too old to be her grandchild, and I wondered who he was. Witabe's father was not there, and on that trip we did not find him.

142 The three sisters of the band were all arrestingly beautiful. They looked alike, with very fine faces, slender features, large eyes, and they all wore handsome white bead ornaments. Heavy eyelids, set off by the pronounced, delicate bones of their faces, made them look of uncertain race, or like houris, and their slender bodies with skins slightly wrinkled made them seem of uncertain age. Perhaps the sun had made the

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

514 women sometimes do this, but Bushman men crouch to urinate. "It is our law," they say.

264 222 While the women rested they had refreshed themselves with one of Twikwe's melons which Twikwe chopped for them by holding the melon between the soles of both feet and mashing its pulp with her digging-stick, which she held in both hands. Then they got up from their grass nest, sharpened their digging-sticks with Twikwe's knife, and set out to begin the search for food. They each chose a different direction and soon they were out of sight. I followed Twikwe to see 222 what she would find, hurrying to keep up as she trampled 481 ahead of me on those spindly, awkward legs of hers, which she kicked out with each step in a walk like the walk of a clown. She kept her back straight, for it was still early and the load in her kaross was light.

222 As I could not speak many words of Gikwe, she didn't even try to talk, but paused from time to time instead to show me things. Once she crouched among the branches of a thorn bush and beckoned to me to show me a tiny vine winding around the bush's trunk. I nodded. It marked an edible root. She pinched the base of the vine where there was a faint touch of green, then, grasping her digging-stick, began to dig. The ground was quite hard, but she dug rapidly, her slender back curved as she squatted over the hole and the muscles of her thin arms swelling. After a long time she threw down her digging-stick and tugged at something in the bottom of the hole. She sat back, and in her hands was a huge stone, which she heaved aside.

"Look," she said, and I crawled beside her into the bush. She had made a hole three feet deep, a foot across, and at the bottom, dim in shadow, lay an immense gray root wedged securely between two stones. "Ga," she said. She ripped the

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

when the tsama melons were gone, but now, perhaps when he saw its vine there and thought about it under the ground, he changed his mind. Squatting near the vine and digging with his hands, he soon had exposed it, two feet down and dark in shadow. He seized it and tore it from the earth. 222

It was shaped like a monstrous beet, with its vine coming from the top like a little stalk and its root bristling from the bottom like a tassel. It had a hard, bark-like crust and it was gray and hairy. Gai held it daintily by its vine, and, as dirt was still dropping off it he slapped and brushed it to clean it; then he held it high above the big cavity it had filled, looked at it with a rather satisfied smile, and said what nice water it would be.

We went home then, walking again in single file in a straight course over the veld, veering only once toward a fallen tree, where the women stopped to gather firewood. The women, walking first, were heavily loaded now with melons, roots, and firewood, Tsetchwe loaded most heavily of all because the baby rode on her shoulder. The women used their digging-sticks as canes because their knees were bending, and walked quickly, trying to get home as soon as possible. After the women came the young boys carrying nothing, and last of all came Gai, holding his bi by its tassel of root. Before long he hurried and caught up to Tsetchwe, and once again he took a turn with Nhwakwe, swinging him from Tsetchwe's shoulders to his own, where Nhwakwe rode happily, his tiny hands pressed over his father's eyes. [481] [313] [482] [481]

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

the buffalo's horn had wounded him. Otherwise, he looked 609
very well. All the people seemed well, especially the children.
Toma's oldest son wore a crown of badger skin with the long 291
hair standing up on it, and two safety pins that we had given 177
him, which he wore as earrings in his pierced ears. With all 301
this he looked bold as a pirate. His brother was nearly as big
as he was, and his sister, Norna, now three, was a slender,
graceful child who regarded the world with dark, wondering
eyes.

Norna's sixteen-year-old uncle, Tu's brother, was there too. 481
He was a lame boy; he had been crippled in one leg since 732
childhood and could hobble only with the help of a long stick.
People had despaired of him, believing that he would never
be able to hunt and therefore never marry or inherit the head-
manship of Gautscha Pan, but when we saw him now and
looked at him closely we noticed a fine row of scars between 881
his eyes and on his arms and chest and we knew that he had 304
hunted and killed an antelope and had been scarified in his
initiation. We had planned on this trip to give him presents
of all kinds, to make him rich, so that he could marry whether
he could hunt or not, but we saw now that this would not be
necessary. When he knew that we had noticed his scars he
told us in great detail the story of the hunt. He told us how he [224]
had gone out with a group of hunters, how he had first seen
the two horns of a kudu above a clump of bushes, how he had
silently hobbled near it, propped himself on his crutch, and
shot it with a poisoned arrow. The arrow had penetrated
deeply and the lame boy had returned to tell the others. They
had followed it with him for a day and in the evening had
found it dead. It was the lame boy's kudu, though; he shot it,
and to Bushmen that is the important thing. He was scarified [884]
with a paste made of the kudu's meat, and ever after that he
was a man.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

happy. She was only ten, but already she had lost her childish belly, although her breasts had not yet begun to grow.

Now everyone was in the werf and people had begun to go back to their fires, leaving Short Kwi alone. When most people were gone, Short Kwi's brother-in-law squatted beside him and, taking his injured leg, began laboriously to help him move toward the veld, toward a little pathway that we had not noticed before. Short Kwi's wife had cleared the path; it led to a place in the veld where Short Kwi could urinate, and slowly, painfully, Short Kwi and his brother-in-law moved down it, the brother-in-law duckwalking, carrying the bad leg while Short Kwi—he who once could run great elands down—edged himself forward on his buttocks, using his hands to brace himself and his good leg to pull himself along.

We were not at his fire when he got back, but we could see him through the trees, inching, and then, when Short Kwi was alone with his wife and daughter, we could watch him sitting by his fire, looking idly around. He was like a wild goose with pinioned wings, squatting there before his fire, watching the sky, the veld, and other people come and go.

Those of us from Nama made a camp apart from the werf, through long grass as high as our chests, inside a little glade of thorn trees. We cleared some of the grass and built a fire, and even then the Bushmen could not stop talking about Short Kwi, although they tried to change the subject; they spoke of him creeping along on his buttocks, even this impossible without someone to help, and all because he had failed to notice an adder that was waiting in his path. Of course, the Bushmen said, he was lucky to be alive. I felt that he was luckier than they supposed, because of his wife, that quiet, gracious, gentle, pretty woman, and his grave little daughter, the image of her mother. The people felt, said

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

veld began to show, the women sang the sun-dance fully, a song quite different from the others, very even, very simple, steady, dignified, and grave.

The dawn wind lifted and blew away the smoke and dust and made the people shiver. The light showed the dancers moving stiffly, the singers hunched together for support and warmth, and revealed dusty, dirty faces and dirty teeth. Dust had made mud in the corners of our mouths and eyes.

Only about ten women were singing in the circle now, and they sat all together at one spot, leaving a lot of space around the fire; only four men danced and they moved slowly in their track, burdened by their rattles. They, too, stayed close together so that most of their huge track was bare.

When the sun was over the horizon the dance stopped. The women ended their song abruptly, stood up, shook the dust and straw from their clothing, and walked away. They did not speak to one another because they were tired. The men talked for a moment as they sat down, stretched, untied their rattles, before walking off two by two toward their werfs. Soon all that remained was the dance track, a deep circular rut in the ground, the big heap of dead white ashes, and the dusty bushes and trees.

The people who had been dancing during the night slept all through the heat of the day and as the afternoon came, lying in the shade of trees and bushes. Flies buzzed over them, the afternoon shadows lengthened and the day cooled, and still they slept on.

When the light was red and the sun was almost setting, the women began to stir, getting to their feet slowly, and then alone or in twos and threes, followed by their children, walked down the path to the water, the last ones to leave

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

481 hurrying because one of the little boys had found a millipede
825 and was trotting behind them carrying it. Bushman women do not like millipedes; millipedes make them very nervous. Someone persuaded the child to drop it, which he did reluctantly. It was a giant, shiny black and a foot long, and it ran away with the front of its body in the air, its head bent like a curbed horse. The little boy watched it go.

515 The women walked through the acacia trees and reached the pan, the shining lake, red now with sunset, and even though the air was getting cool the children ran in the shallow water, splashing, the women crouched on the rocks to bathe. They took off their karosses and bathed their arms and legs and faces, washing all the dust away, then brushed their teeth with their fingers. Beautiful Ungka called for Little Dabe and hung her ornaments on him while she bathed. He ran through the water playing, splashing with the other children, quite unconscious of his gorgeous array. Beautiful Ungka was so supple that as she sat bathing she could lay her body down on the rocks between her raised knees, which she did to reach the water, saving herself the trouble of moving forward.

292 After they had bathed, the young girls made aloe circlets for their heads, red in the red light of the sky, and they seemed very innocent and beautiful, fresh and clean; they dressed themselves slowly as the sun went down, then walked into the water, where they danced, slowly, idly, kicking to make a rhythmic splash.

854 Little Dabe, on the shore now, found the rocks hard on his feet and began to wail, and all alone on top of the rocks, picking his feet up one after the other, he was like a peacock in his ornaments, with his complaining, raucous cry. Beauti-
857 ful Ungka carried him then, although she too was barefoot,
415 bouncing him up and down while the other women rinsed and filled their ostrich eggshells.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Medicine Bees

222 THE DAY after the dance was the day before we left Nama to return to the United States. In all the time that we had stayed at Nama we had not been to Gautscha Pan, and now Toma said he wanted to go there to gather honey from the Gautscha baobab tree. Before we left, he sat in his werf telling me stories of people who thought that they could climb baobab trees but whose self-confidence had been excessive, because they had all fallen, each and every one.

● 481 222 165 Steinbok Gumtsa was one of these, said Toma, and he was an excellent climber. Baobabs that others could not climb he managed, and ate honey from the upper branches every time. One day, while watching bees fly about the top of the very high baobab at Gautscha Pan, Steinbok Gumtsa thought to bring himself luck and said: "I am going to climb, but I will slip and fall and be killed." The others told him not to try it, but he did. "He thought he was too good," said Toma, "and that is why he did fall. The others found him dead at the bottom."

One-eyed Nishi was another good climber. He also tried to reach the honey in the top of the Gautscha baobab, but he slipped and fell and the other Bushmen found him dead at

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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the bottom too, "with his head driven down between his shoulders," said Toma laconically, hunching his own neck to show how it was.

A third man whom Toma did not name climbed for honey in the Gura baobab, a tree somewhat north of Gautscha Pan, and he also fell; but, happily, he survived his experience. His sister and her husband were below him, watching, and when they saw him fall they held out their arms to catch him. He fell through their arms, of course, but his fall was broken and though he was unconscious for a long time he finally did recover.

The moral of these stories, Toma said, was to show that young people should listen to older people and not act rashly. I believe that he thought I was going to try to climb the Gautscha baobab (which I had already done, though only to the lowest branch, fifteen feet from the ground), for he went on to say: "When Bushmen tell young people not to climb baobab trees they should listen. It is seldom that a person lives who falls from a baobab tree, they are so high. Even those good climbers I told you about, they all fell." I assured him that I did not even want to climb it and he said: "Good. When we who are experienced get the honey you can watch from below. Then you can see just as well."

The Gautscha baobab was somewhat east of the pan, and we could see it rising from the plain when we were almost a mile away from it. It loomed up at the horizon, towering, its mass of upper branches hazy because we were so far. As we moved toward it, it seemed to move away from us like a distant mountain, but gradually, after a long time, it began slowly to get larger, looming higher, its top branches reaching up to the sky, where the clouds of spring were already forming as the desert got ready for the rains, three months away.

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
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137 It was noon when we reached the tree; we broke through the bushes that surrounded it and came into its clearing, a circle thirty yards across of stony, barren ground from which the long roots had sucked the nourishment, and in the middle of the circle the great tree rose, pink-skinned and mighty, the claimer of two lives, twenty feet in diameter and almost two hundred feet high. Its lower branches were heavy and enormous, but the branches got smaller toward the top, the upper ones very thin, crisscrossing each other like lace. On the eastern face of the tree there were no branches; the pink
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481 trunk towered up and up, smooth and bare. On this side was an ascending row of pegs driven in by Bushmen long ago who had been after honey, used in later years by Bushmen hunters trying to rob the hives again or to scan the countryside for game. The pegs led from the ground around the trunk to the lowest branch, then up the trunk again to the next branch, ending finally at the top of the great tree, almost out of sight.

I knew this old tree very well, for during the year that we had lived at Gautscha we had camped beside it. It had been the home of many creatures then; and now the eastern face of the tree, the great bare slab rising like pink stone, was pocked with little holes. Some of them were empty, surely, but some had tufts of dry grass showing in the openings, little creatures' nests, and here and there, between the roots or in the forks of branches, were the caves of larger animals.

224 Bees had lived in a hole among the branches halfway up,
136 though Toma said the bees had now moved higher; a mongoose had lived in a little cave between the roots on the south side, though now the mongoose was dead, snared and killed by Toma's son; a python that had lived in a hole on the north side was also dead, killed and eaten by an old Bushman woman we had known; but a colony of green-furred squirrels that had lived on the lowest branches, we saw, were

11: Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1958 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

HUNTSMEN OF NYAE NYAE

The !Kung still practice man's oldest craft

By JOHN MARSHALL

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HUNTING is the work of men. !Kung hunters range the land, seeking the agile game. The men walk rapidly, never lowering their eyes, making sure of the awkward ground with their dextrous feet. They glance swiftly over the distances of the country and, with their good vision and knowledge of what to look for, see any moving thing. As girls learn gathering, boys learn most of hunting on their own. They hunt little birds in the grass around the *werft* houses. They impale beetles with tiny arrows shot from toy bows. Tracking, which is the most difficult part

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CHIEF WEAPONS OF !Kung are bow and poisoned arrows (in quiver, above).

[p. 45]

11:Marshall E-5 (1950-1955) 1958
FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

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484 food resources of *Nyae Nyae.* Instead, these are the *mangetti* and *tsi* nuts. Both are found only far from permanent water. Distance becomes more significant when one thinks not only of miles—but of time, footsteps, heat and carrying capacity. From the nearest western water, it is about twenty miles to a *mangetti* forest. The distance between *tsi* and the closest water is about seven miles. The people calculate their marching ability at about ten miles a day, with women and children, although men can make forty if necessary. They gather food as they travel, for a day of traveling is just like any other day, with children and old people to be provided for.

[481]

221 IN order to exploit the environment successfully, with their limited technological equipment, the !Kung must move from place to place. The calendar of their movements is revealing. In winter, the people are forced to remain near the waterholes,

12: Marshall E-5 (1951-1959) 1961 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

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FIG. 13. One of the hunters (in the background) brings a hindquarter of meat to the owner of the arrow and lays it on branches beside his scherm

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FIG. 14. Kham, a lame man, swings himself along with two sticks. He cannot hunt. Meat which some relatives or friends have given him hangs on the tree. His wife pounds some food with mortar and pestle

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222 The net effect of this effort is that an individual must drink much more than the minimum daily requirement of 72 ounces of water. In fact, men who were living on Fockea roots, were observed to dig out between 15 and 20 of the roots per day. The quantity of water provided by these roots is estimated at 150-300 ounces, part of which went to provide water for the children of the camp.

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312 A description of one Fockea trip, in which the author participated, will serve to illustrate some of the difficulties of living away from standing water.

[123] This trip began on 6 November and ended on 16 November, 1964. The group consisted of 12 Bushmen (plus the author); there were three men, four women, and five children. One of the young women gave birth during her stay so the returning group consisted of 13 Bushmen.

November 6 - This group (minus one of the men who came out the following day) set out from the Dobe waterhole at 10:00

[103] a.m. They spent the day walking to a nut forest named !wi/wama which was situated eleven miles west of Dobe. The original plan was to remain there for five days.

[481] The pace was leisurely to suit the three older children
[855] (ages 12, 8, 6 respectively) who went on foot and the young
[843] woman who was in the terminal month of her pregnancy. On the way we stopped at intervals to eat seven different species of